

# 'The building is small and cramped up'

By AARON ALDRIDGE  
Staff Writer

UNITY — Shawn Maguire has been an inmate at the Sullivan County House of Corrections for eight months while awaiting trial.

"The people and the staff are great here," Maguire, 32, said. "But the building is small and cramped up. There's no question we need a new institution."

Maguire said he has been in and out of jail since the mid-1990s and has spent time at several corrections facilities. He said he started to get into trouble while he was a student at Keene State College and has been part of the system ever since.

His stay at the jail is expected to end sometime in September when he will either be released or sent to another facility.

Maguire is held in Unit 1 with 36 other inmates. The unit was designed to hold 24 people, making space and privacy a highly prized commodity.

"Other facilities have more options available because they have more space," Maguire said. "It would help the recidivism rate if there were more programs."

Maguire said he would like to take advantage of programs such as life skills, crime prevention and anger management. But because of the limited space, he is on a waiting list for the one anger management class available to inmates.

"I would also like to finish my education," Maguire said.

Each room in Unit 1 holds up to seven steel bunks and resembles more of a dorm room than a jail. Inmates are held in their room most of the day except for one hour



Shawn Maguire, 32, has been an inmate at the Sullivan County House of Corrections for eight months while awaiting trial. Maguire says that there's "no question" that a new institution is needed. AP PHOTO

when they are allowed to go outside or when they are allowed to use the recreation room — a small 20-by-30-foot room with a television and a few chairs.

The television area is separated by a chain-link fence with a block of wood holding one of the support poles to the ceiling. Although very clean, the area, as well as the rest of the jail, appears worn with several repairs having been made to the ceiling, walls and floors.

"The building is definitely old," Maguire said. "It seems like it's cannibalizing off of itself."

Maguire said he obviously doesn't like being confined, but the staff has made his experience in Sullivan County somewhat bearable.

"The food is good and I've gained some weight," Maguire said. "And the staff use the space they have as good as they can."